



Town of *Westford* Massachusetts

Town Manager's Newsletter

August 2014



**Jodi Ross,
Town
Manager**

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Association first meeting
September 30th , 8 AM
At The Westford
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Watch Meetings Online

westford
CAT

www.westfordcat.org

Dear Westford residents,

I am excited to announce that the solar park related to the net-metering contract we entered into to purchase energy credits (thus reducing our municipal electricity bills) is up and running in Hubbardston. I toured this new solar park this week with Assistant Town Manager John Mangiaratti and Assistant Town Engineer Jeremy Downs. It is quite impressive and we expect to begin receiving credits immediately with anticipated savings of \$125K per year. We have another project under construction in Charlton that will produce additional savings for our town.



(L. to R.) Asst. Town Eng. Jeremy Downs, Asst. Town Manager John Mangiaratti, and Town Manager Jodi Ross, at the Hubbardston Solar Park.

In keeping with the Board of Selectmen/Town Manager goals for 2014, we have asked the Board of Selectmen to consider declaring the Graniteville Fire Station, located at 54 Broadway Street, as surplus property with the intent to sell it. Abutters have been notified and the board will hear this matter at 7:45pm on August 26th. Since the station was decommissioned, it has been used to store items from various town departments, and at this point we see no future town need for this building. As part of the process of preparing the building for sale, the town ran a surplus auction during the month of July. This auction allowed us to sell items which have been held in storage for many years, yet are no longer needed by the town. The auction was a great success, raising over \$6,000 for our town.

Many of our residents host a number of International Students each year who study at Westford Academy. Gphomestay, the international educational student services provider who helps to coordinate this effort, is looking for host families to host students during the upcoming school year. A generous stipend of \$7,000 is provided to each family to support the student during the student's stay. If you are interested in hosting a student, you may find additional information or submit an application at www.gphomestay.com.

The Westford Knight preservation and revitalization project continued to make progress throughout July and August. A protective structure along with granite posts and an informational sign are being installed. Many thanks to our firefighter Dave Christiana for all of his efforts on this project.

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WWW.WESTFORDMA.GOV

The Board of Selectmen, at their meeting on July 22nd, approved multiple contracts which will allow for the commencement of various projects throughout our community. Allied Paving was contracted for a drainage improvements project at the Millennium School; Vanasse & Associates, Inc will conduct a peer review of traffic mediation alternatives at the proposed Orchard Square commercial development, as requested by the Planning Board; and Dore & Whittier Architects, Inc. will begin work on a Fire Department Center Station study.

Pan Am has provided training to our firefighters as agreed to following our meeting with Pan Am representatives. They have also offered to pay for the cost of additional training at a facility in Pueblo, Colorado.



Westford Firefighters reviewing emergency response procedures and safety equipment on rail cars and locomotives.



Our Economic Development Committee has been working diligently on assisting with the creation of a Westford Business Association. The first meeting of the new association is scheduled for September 30th at 8:00am in the Westford Regency. The committee is also creating a vacant commercial properties database to assist us in finding new tenants for existing vacant office and other commercial space. More information is available on our website at: [Economic Development Committee](#).

Our Strategic Planning Retreat, held on June 19th at Kimball Farm, was the best attended retreat yet with 140 residents attending. A summary will be presented to the Selectmen soon, but information or an evaluation if you attended may be found at the following link: [Strategic Planning Retreat](#).

Our Selectmen received notice from the owners of Drew Gardens, 66 – 68 Boston Road, of their entering a purchase and sale (P&S) to sell the property. As our town holds Agricultural Preservation Restrictions on the property, we have the right of first refusal on the sale. Originally the P&S was not a bona fide offer, so we sent notice to the property owner advising of such, who then amended the P&S making it a valid offer. We appointed a nine member (with 2 alternates) Drew Gardens Task Force - to explore and investigate whether or not the town should exercise its right of first refusal to purchase Drew Gardens and make a recommendation to the Selectmen. In addition, the group is being asked to explore possibilities for funding sources for a potential purchase of the property at our Fall Special Town Meeting. They have been meeting for over a month now and a recommendation is expected soon.

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The Selectmen have opened the warrant for our October 20, 2014 Special Town Meeting. The calendar for the meeting may be found at this link: [Special Town Meeting](#).

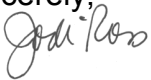
Please make use of our new Lost & Found Pet Notification System. This is a system whereby a pet owner may notify the town of a lost pet, and after verification, provide details and a picture. This information will be emailed to a list serve that interested residents may subscribe to. This will allow us to get information out about your lost pet much faster and more efficiently, and to a much larger audience, than by tacking posters on telephone poles, which is also against our bylaws and not permitted by the pole owners (National Grid and Verizon). You may subscribe and learn more about this program at this link: [Lost Pets](#)

We now have both a twitter and a new town facebook page - both of which will provide you with additional information about our town at the following links: [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#) .

There are several openings on local boards and committees, including the Affordable Housing, Bylaw Review, Communications Advisory, Cultural Council, Historical Commission, Pedestrian Safety, Public Works Initiative Committee, and others, and I urge you to peruse our website for information about the work of these committees. If you have interest, please complete a Citizen's Activity form at this link: [Citizen Activity Form](#) or stop by and fill out a form in the town manager's office.

I hope you enjoy these last precious weeks of summer.

Sincerely,



Jodi Ross



Veterans Services

VA Healthcare Benefits Field Trip

Are you eligible for VA health care? If you served in the active military service and were separated under any condition other than dishonorable, you may qualify for VA health care benefits. Current and former members of the Reserves or National Guard who were called to active duty by a Federal order and completed the full period for which they were called or ordered to active duty may be eligible for VA health benefits as well.



For detailed eligibility requirements, please visit the [VA Health Benefits Eligibility page](#).



We are scheduling a trip to the Bedford VA Medical Center on Wednesday, October 15 for veterans who have never signed up for VA healthcare. We will be assisting you in completing the application and then you'll be able to attend an introduction to VA Healthcare services. Seating is limited on the shuttle bus so please call now to reserve your spot. Please contact Terry Stader, Westford's Veterans Service

Officer/Agent to register by calling (978) 392-1170 or via email at veterans@westfordma.gov.



J.V. Fletcher Library

The Library's JULY 2014 submission to the Town Manager's Newsletter opened with the sentence:

"Summer Reading Programs at the Library are not just about child's play!"

And while it speaks volumes that 616 adults signed up for "Literary Elements" and 500 Teens and Tweens had a blast during "Spark a Reaction," I would be remiss if I didn't shine a spotlight on the incorrigible antics of *Nancy the Hood* (i.e. the Head of the Children's Dept.) and her *Band of Merry Women* (her staff.)

It does not surprise this Assistant Director that while 1,350 Children signed up for the Children's Summer Reading Program and 1,570 of them attended over 15 shows, the really over-the-top statistic is the number of raffle tickets ~ 2,386 ~ that were filled out each time a child flew into the Children's Room to look for and find the *Fly Guy*; *Fly Guy* is a little stuffed animal based on a cartoon character that the Children's staff hid in a new spot once a week.



Yes, the Children's Dept. Staff praise children's reading logs, hand-out fabulous prizes and hire the best performers they can find, but what they really care about is that each child who walks up the ramp into the Children's Room knows from experience that at least 1 Librarian will seek him/her out for a conversation ("What book did you like best this week;" "wait till you can see the way this prize lights up when it jumps off the desk and spins on the floor" "did you really draw that picture, or did you ask an artist to help you out?")

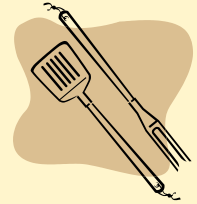
They expect to have fun, to be fussed over, and they know that someone wants to hear what they have to say. And there's laughter. Lots of laughter. It's what summer at the Library is/should all be about.



Council On Aging - Coming Events

COOKOUT WITH YOUR REPRESENTATIVE

Representative Arciero will be hosting a cookout at Cameron on Friday, August 22nd, at 11:30 AM. This a great opportunity to meet with him. Register at 978-692-5523.



MINI GOLF AT KIMBALL FARM

Come out and enjoy a round of mini-golf on Wednesday, September 3rd at 10:30 AM. A lunch will follow with choice of hot dog or hamburger, a drink and a small ice cream. A \$14 fee includes all. Register early at 978-692-5523. Arrive & check in at 10:15 AM.

KIMBALL GOLF TOURNAMENT

This year, we will be having the 15th Annual Cameron Classic at Kimball's on Wednesday, September 17th at 9 AM. A \$14 entry fee will include 18 holes of golf, a hot dog or hamburger lunch with a cold drink and a small ice cream. This has proven to be a fun day for beginners and low handicaps alike. You may register with a partner or as an individual. Payment is due at time of registration. Please call 978-692-5523. Arrive and sign in at 8:45 AM.



ESSEX VALLEY STEAM TRAIN AND CONNECTICUT RIVERBOAT

Friday, September 19th
Fox Coach departs from the Franco at 8:30AM. Enjoy a delicious luncheon at Dock & Dine Restaurant with two meal choices. Next stop a scenic Train ride followed by a relaxing one hour narrated cruise on the Connecticut River. The all inclusive trip cost of \$87 per person (includes driver gratuity). Call 978-692-5523 to register.

To view the complete
Council On Aging Newsletter
please visit our website at:

www.westfordma.gov/coa and click on [Newsletters](#).



Westford Senior Center

Recreation Department Update

TENNIS The Westford Junior Tennis team had a successful summer season qualifying for 2014 USTA New England JR. Team Tennis Championships. The team coached by Donna Holmes will be competing at the USTA Mass State Championships being held at Mount Holyoke College August 13 & 14.

CREW Crew team competed in the 132nd Royal Canadian Henley Regatta. This is the second year that Westford-Littleton Crew team members have competed in the regatta. Team participants included Lilly Keele, Alina Ryan, Amelia Shein, Lauren Smith, Katie Stokes, Kassie Wilson, Emma Wood, McKayla Wood, and coxswains Haley Doucette and Allie Nussbaum. The regatta is one of the top amateur events in North America. The team competed in U19 women's coxed four, U19 women's double, U19 women's pair and U19 women's eight. The U19 pair of Keele and Wood placed 3rd in their heat, advancing to the semi-final where they placed 5th. U19 pair of Stokes and Sheen placed 6th. Coach Eddie Bruce stated he was happy with the team's efforts and results in a very competitive international regatta.

AFTERSCHOOL ENRICHMENT The Recreation Department's popular Westford Afterschool Enrichment Program is all set to begin its 10th season for children in grades K thru 8. The program held at all six elementary schools and Middle School Rec Club offers a variety of activities from the end of the school day to 5:45PM Monday through Friday. Program participants register for a minimum of one day/session and one activity. The Site Directors Tiffany Gintner (Abbot), Michelle Collette (Crisafulli), Tamara Demaio (Day), Donna Burnham (Miller), Geri Simon (Nabnasset), Linda Hillman (Robinson), Merideth Goddard (Blanchard/Stony Brook) along with Assistant Site Directors D.J. Brock (Middle School), Elizabeth Silva (Nabnasset) and Krithika Venkitasubramony (Robinson) are excited for the new school year. Registration information is available on line at www.westfordrec.com

PROGRAM BROCHURE The fall/winter brochure is scheduled to be mailed out to households August 25th.

Program information is available on line at www.westfordrec.com

Water Department



Nabnasset Water Main Improvement Project

The Westford Water Department began work on a water main replacement project in the Nabnasset area last week (**Edwards Avenue** - from Oak Hill Road to Birch Road Extension - **and Hadley Road** - from Edwards Avenue to Byrne Avenue), and includes the replacement of approximately 2,500 linear feet of 8" asbestos cement water main with 8" ductile iron water main, renewal of approximately 35 residential service connections, and the installation of new gate valves and fire hydrants. Included in the project, new main will be run between Birch Road extension and Edwards Avenue. By connecting these mains we will get rid of 2 dead ends—which can contribute to poor water quality conditions.

The existing 8-inch asbestos cement water mains on Edwards Avenue and Hadley Road were installed in the early 1950's are in need of replacement due to exterior degradation caused by aggressive groundwater and soil conditions. This stretch of main has been identified as a distribution system deficiency due to its history of breakage, and needs to be replaced. In addition – the elimination of 2 dead ends will also result in improved water quality.

C.C. Construction (Contractor for the project) will begin construction on August 5th at the intersection of Edwards Avenue and Oak Hill Road. Construction is expected to last eight to ten weeks, and will take place between the hours of 7:00 am and 4:00 pm Monday through Thursday (9 hours), and 7:00 am to 11:00 am on Friday (4 hours). Work between Trails End Road and Birch Road Extension will not begin until after Labor Day.

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Water Department

Nabnasset Water Main Improvement Project - Continued

Construction always involves some inconvenience, noise, dust, street closures, and parking restrictions. Furthermore, area customers will experience interruptions in water service while crews connect residences to the new water main. Throughout the course of the project, we intend to supply notices to residents in advance of water shut-offs. Please be advised, however, that there could be unanticipated shut-offs. We will do our best to minimize any inconvenience. The Contractor has been notified that residents shall have access to their driveways at all times.



For any questions or comments about the project please feel free to contact the Water Department at 978-692-5529. Project updates will be posted on the Water Department website at www.westfordma.gov/water. We appreciate your patience as this project proceeds.

Westford Farmers Market

The Westford Farmer's Market Located on the Westford Town Common

Every Tuesday, 2:30 - 6:30 p.m., until October 28, 2014



www.sustainablewestford.org/farmers-market/

